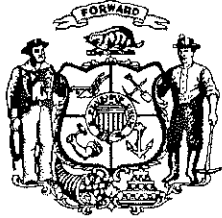


THE STATE OF WISCONSIN

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JOINT COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

MEMORANDUM

To: Members
Joint Committee on Finance

From: Senator Mark Miller
Representative Mark Pocan

Date: April 26, 2010

Re: Monthly Update from the Government Accountability Board on the
Statewide Voter Registration System

Attached is a copy of the January, February and March report from the Government Accountability Board on the status of the Wisconsin Statewide Voter Registration System.

The report is being provided for your information only. No formal action is required by the Committee. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions.

Attachment

MM:MP:jm

State of Wisconsin\Government Accountability Board

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JUDGE WILLIAM EICH
Chair

KEVIN J. KENNEDY
Director and General Counsel

April 23, 2010

The Honorable Mark Miller, Senate Co-Chair
Joint Committee on Finance
Room 409 South, State Capitol
Madison, WI 53707



The Honorable Mark Pocan, Assembly Co-Chair
Joint Committee on Finance
Room 309 East, State Capitol
Madison, WI 53708

Dear Senator Miller and Representative Pocan:

I am pleased to provide you and your committee members with an update on the Wisconsin Statewide Voter Registration System (SVRS) for the months of January, February and March 2010.

The reporting requirement for the Election Administration Fund that supports the SVRS sunset on June 30, 2009, in accordance with 2007 Wisconsin Act 20, Section 9227(IL). Although this mandate is expired, we committed to continuing to report quarterly on the progress of the SVRS in order to keep the JCF informed and involved.

SVRS continues to serve our local election partners effectively by being a valuable tool in the management and administration of elections in Wisconsin. Equally important is the fact that our 1,923 county and municipal clerk customers and their staffs are noticing the continuing improvements we are steadily making to the System. This attached report brings you up-to-date since our last quarterly summary regarding the status of SVRS core activities and noteworthy achievements.

Please let us know if we can provide additional information. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kevin J. Kennedy".

Kevin J. Kennedy
Director and General Counsel
Government Accountability Board

cc: Co-Chairs, Joint Legislative Committee on Audit
Senator Spencer Cogg
Secretary Michael Morgan, Department of Administration
Robert Lang, Legislative Fiscal Bureau
Vickie Holten, Legislative Fiscal Bureau
Cynthia Dombrowski, State Budget Office Analyst
Nathaniel E. Robinson, Elections Division Administrator
Barbara A. Hansen, SVRS Director

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JUDGE WILLIAM EICH
Chair

KEVIN J. KENNEDY
Director and General Counsel

Wisconsin Government Accountability Board

Statewide Voter Registration System Quarterly Summary January 1, 2010 through March 31, 2010

The following activities occurred regarding the Statewide Voter Registration System (SVRS) during this quarterly reporting period:

Quarterly Fiscal Summary

Expenditures for SVRS for January, February and March 2010 totaled \$409,440.69 which included:

- A. Staffing costs;
- B. Payments Made to Outside Contractors; and,
- C. Supplies and Services Costs.

Expenditures for SVRS' salaries, supplies and services for this same period last year (January, February and March 2009), totaled \$546,343.

SVRS Core Activities

1. Software Upgrade(s)

Software development efforts this quarter have been focused on the new version of SVRS, version 7.0. This version includes a core software upgrade to keep current with Microsoft's .NET development platform, as well as fixes related to absentee, candidate ballot access tracking, reports and mailings, and improving the response time of the SVRS. User Acceptance Testing of version 7.0 will begin in early April. The new version is scheduled to be released for local election officials to start using at the beginning of June.

The next version of SVRS, 7.1, is also in the planning stages. This version will include more simplifications to the Absentee process and updates required to implement the MOVE Act. This build is targeted to be available to clerks in late July.

2. Data Interface

Clerks continue to use SVRS to run HAVA Checks to validate against Department of Transportation (DOT) and Social Security Administration (SSA) records, and to confirm

matches with Department of Corrections (DOC) for felon information, and Department of Health Services (DHS) for death data, as part of on-going HAVA compliance.

Clerks process HAVA Checks and confirm matches on an ongoing basis during the course of their daily election administration tasks, having done so since the Interfaces became functional in SVRS on August 6, 2008. During the months of January, February, and March 2010, clerks processed approximately 11,739 HAVA Checks with DOT/SSA on new voter applications in SVRS. (Retroactive HAVA Check information is not included in these totals. Please see the section regarding Retroactive HAVA Checks for more information on that initiative.)

3. Election Readiness

As the 2010 Spring Election Cycle approached, staff provided training and technical assistance to county and municipal clerks for their election readiness. For example:

- SVRS Checklists II for the 2010 Spring Election was distributed to clerks.
- SVRS trainers conducted classes in SVRS for beginners, advanced users and those who are looking for a refresher course in preparation for the upcoming 2010 election cycle.
- Prior to the February primary and April election, G.A.B. provided extended hours of operation where the G.A.B. Help Desk remained open and Board staff was available to assist local election officials. The extended hours included evening hours the week before and Saturday hours immediately preceding the election events.

4. Data Requests

The Board regularly receives requests from customers interested in purchasing electronic voter lists. The SVRS allows us to generate electronic voter lists statewide, for any county or municipality in the state, or by any election district, from congressional districts to school districts. The voter lists also include all elections that a voter has participated in, going back to 2006 when the system was deployed.

The Board received many data requests during this quarter due to the upcoming Spring election events, and interest is beginning for the Fall 2010 elections as candidates start to gear up for their contests. The following statistics demonstrate the activity in this area during this reporting period:

- 122 inquiries were received requesting information on purchasing electronic voter lists from the SVRS system. This is compared to 69 for the last reporting period.
- 96 electronic voter lists were purchased.
- 7 paper voter lists were purchased.
- \$22,006.25 was received for the 103 paper and electronic voter lists requested.

5. Education, Training and Technical Assistance Summary

Training Type	Number of Students
Statewide Voter Registration System (SVRS) Application and Election Management	52
SVRS Advanced Election Management, Absentee and Reports	205
Voter Registration	22
Municipal Clerk Core	60
Chief Inspector Baseline	1023
WisLine Programs	321
Web-Based Election Training System (WBETS)	155
HAVA Interfaces	45
Total	1883

Noteworthy SVRS Initiatives

1. Status: Retroactive HAVA Checks

The Retroactive HAVA Check Project is now complete, with the Final Report presented to the Board at the March 23 - 24, 2010 meeting. Highlights of the project include:

- 777,561 voters who registered between January 1, 2006 and August 5, 2008, received the required HAVA check. 16% of the Retroactive HAVA Checks resulted in a non-match initially when the checks were first run. At the close of the project, after corrections had been made, only 9% of the voters still showed a non-match. This represents a 42% reduction in the total number of non-matches.
- Approximately 70,000 non-matches remain at the close of this project. The majority of the remaining non-matches (65%) are voters who did not respond to the Retroactive HAVA Check Letter asking them to verify their voter information. Another 26% were due to the Retroactive HAVA Check Letter returned as undeliverable.
- 7,125 HAVA Checks still remain a non-match in SVRS even after the voter responded and verified their information. A certain percentage of HAVA Checks will always remain a non-match. Differences in data between various government databases are a major factor in non-matches

Work will continue in an effort to resolve the remaining non-matches in records of those voters who did not respond to the initial Retroactive HAVA Checks. Board staff is evaluating the best way to proceed with this process.

A copy of the *Final Report of the Retroactive HAVA Check Project* is provided with this report and the Report is also available electronically through the G.A.B. website at <http://elections.state.wi.us/docview.asp?docid=19257&locid=47/> under the March Board Meeting Information.

2. Status: Efforts to Improve the Statewide Voter Registration System's Performance

As previously reported, an Ad-Hoc SVRS Study Team was formed to evaluate the SVRS and plan for the future of the application.

The team met to review a proposed "roadmap" for the future of SVRS. The roadmap is being finalized with comments from the Team and will soon be presented to Board management. Board management also met with Board IT staff regarding a proposal presented by DET to provide more comprehensive IS support services for the Board's portfolio of applications. The Director and General Counsel and agency management continue to analyze the DET proposal. The Team's "roadmap" and DET's proposal will form a cohesive plan for the future.

SVRS' performance continues to be a concern; however, feedback received on the new or improved functionalities continues to be positive. Addressing SVRS' performance is a 2010 priority. During this reporting period, SVRS was used throughout the state for judicial, school board and other local elections.

3. Online Voter Registration Initiative

The Online Voter Registration Team began formal data gathering on experiences and best practices from other states that have already implemented online registration, or are in the process of developing such systems. The team also worked on cost estimates for developing an online registration system based on input from the public and lawmakers about what features such a system might include. On March 31, 2010, the Senate Committee on Labor, Elections and Urban Affairs, and the Assembly Committee on Elections and Campaign Reform held a joint public hearing on 2009 Senate Bill 645 and 2009 Assembly Bill 892. This legislation would authorize implementation of electronic (online) registration. Nathaniel E. Robinson, Elections Division Administrator, and Shane Faulk, Staff Counsel, presented testimony on behalf of Kevin J. Kennedy, Director and General Counsel, in support of the proposed legislation.. The electronic registration provision of AB 892/SB 645 have been incorporated into the substitute amendment to the AB 895/SB 640 the Wisconsin Voter Protection Act (VPA).

4. Improving the Canvass Process

The Team to improve the canvas process and retire the Board's current election administration software, SWEBIS II, continued to meet. DET presented a walkthrough of proposed changes. DET continues to work on the canvass application taking into

account business requirements and comments from Board staff. Next steps include vetting the canvass process with our clerk partners before final changes are determined and the timeline for implementation is set.

5. Voter/Felon Comparison

In accordance with State statutes, the Board is performing an audit that compares voter participation records in SVRS against convicted felon records at Department of Corrections. This audit is used to detect if felons improperly voted in the election.

Regarding voting in the November 4, 2008 Presidential and General Election, in November 2009, 124 individuals were referred to the appropriate 37 District Attorneys. 20 District Attorneys have reported to the Board on the status of the referrals. District Attorneys are required by law to give status reports within 40 days and every 30 days thereafter until the case is closed. In February 2010, 17 District Attorneys were sent reminder notices that their 40-day reports had not been received and were overdue. Currently 9 reports are still outstanding.

During this reporting period, clerks responded after review of the list sent to them in December 2009 regarding voting in the February 17, 2009, Spring Primary and April 6, 2009 Spring Election. On February 3, 2010, 8 individuals were referred to the appropriate 7 District Attorneys. There were 2 potential matches from the February 2009 primary and 6 from the April 2009 election. 4 District Attorneys have reported to the Board on the status of the referrals. District Attorneys are required by law to give status reports within 40 days and every 30 days thereafter until the case is closed. Currently there are 3 outstanding reports.

90-day Forecast

1. Voter/Felon Comparison – Staff will perform the comparison when the name of a person was found who is on the DOC list and was a voter in SVRS for the 2010 February Spring Primary and 2010 April Spring Election once all the voter participation records are entered by local election clerk users.
2. Retroactive HAVA Checks – Staff will initiate a process to resolve the remaining non-matches in records of those voters who did not respond to the initial Retroactive HAVA Checks, after evaluating the best way to proceed with this process.
3. Inter-State Voter Registration Data Sharing – One of the methods to improve the accuracy of voter information in SVRS is to share voter registration data between states, and enhance the detection of possible voter fraud, particularly the states that border Wisconsin: Illinois, Iowa, Michigan and Minnesota. A Board project team launched an initiative in December to research and engage in data sharing with neighboring states.
4. DET IS Proposal – Board management will decide on a proposal presented by Department of Administration/Division of Enterprise Technology (DET) Administrator Oskar Anderson and his team to provide comprehensive IS support services for all of the Board's computer program needs.

5. Election Readiness – Staff will strategize on the most efficient and effective ways to prepare local election officials for the 2010 September Partisan Primary and 2010 General Election, taking into account updates in the SVRS software and potential changes to election laws.

